8/8/73

Dear Harold,

I've been working very hard on my job and my thesis. My job has been tedious at time for I am not interested in the topic, but I have found the work on my thesis rather exciting, and I look forward to continuing it. I took the law school entrance tests a couple weeks ago and they wre HARD! The grammar sections were simple, but the reading comprehension was quite tough, and the cases which are intended to test one's ability to employ legal reasoning would surely tax a judge! I rather think (or fear) that some of those sections of the test were intended for superficial and not penetrating analysis. I've had a pretty enjoyable summer, and have met many new friends. However, I really detested living in this section of the city for the summer. I felt trapped here; it is dirty, hot, and depressing. I've decided that I need a major vacation before school starts, and have made plans to go to Jamaica for a week with a couple of my friends. I can't tell you how much this means to me. I'm sorry to tell you that this means that I won't have time to come for another visit this summer. If at all possible, I'd like to come some time during the semester--hope I can arrange it. I'll be in Jamaica from Aug. 22-29.

I've come across a couple interesting things for my thesis. For one, I checked up on the Denny Pritt book you recommended. He has two in the 1939-40 period. The first is called Light on Moscow, the other Must the War Spread? (pub. Jan 1940) I think the latter is the one to which you referred, although its thesis is somewhat different than that which you related to me. Pritt makes the case that Britain, the U.S. and their client states are trying to "shift the war", i.e., that they are trying to either join with the Germans or simply involve the Germans in a war with the U.S.S.R. He inclines more toward the former, that Britain wishes to become Germany's ally in a war against Russia. The evidence for this extreme theory, as presented in the book, is weak. Most of the book is excellent, however. He beautifully demonstrates how Britain and her allies have been anti-USSR and bent on destroying Bolshevism, and how they have been utterly hypocritical concerning "aggression," abetting and allowing fascist aggression all over the world, yet jumping on Russia when she invaded Finland; he very effectively exposes the sanctimony of it all. He shows amazing foresight in pointing out that the vital question to Britain is not that she win the war but rather how she is to win it, adding that Britain's plans are to win the war in a way which preserves the capitalist structure and status quo of before the war. He draws on the historical lesson of World War I, when Europe and especially Eastern Europe was on the threshhold of turning toward Bolshevism, and only a severe and militaristic anti-Soviet policy maintained the capitalist structure. Another excellent feature of the book is the clear picture it paints of the position of the USSR as of that time, faced with a hostile and immoral world which had, in effect, caused World War II out of its desire to contain and destroy Bolshevism. The book was also very helpful in terms of gaining a historical perspective which is lost in so many of the "histories" of the origins of the Cold War which begin in 1945 or 1941. It is possible to write

a narrative history of events beginning in those years, but now I fully realize that it is impossible and outright illegitimate to try to write an interpretive history of the Cold War's origins without going back to 1917 and including every year up to WWII. Soviet needs and policies during and after the War simply cannot be understood in the proper context if the preceeding period is not understood and considered.

Second--in a used-book store I found a copy of Carl Marzani's We Can Be Friends (which I borrowed from you). I read it and it is generally excellent, especially in light of when it was written. It does have its faults, including a very naive view of the USSR. I just discovered, in Penn's library, that Marzani's book has been reprinted (in 1971) with a lengthy introduction by a promenant "revisionist" cold war historian, who has enough gall to write that the failure of American scholars or students to read the book "is eloquent testimony to the poverty of critical thought in American education in the 1950's," although he sees no poverty in current scholarship when he says that "Marzani focused on most of the issues in 1945 and 1946 that later 'revisionist' historians would emphasize in their own analyses of the origins of the Cold War." If Marzani was the first to make the basic analysis, it is hard for me to see how those who followed him can make claims to "their own analysis," especially when none have cited Marzani, and only one even includes him in his bibliography.

Must go now. Please give my best to Lil. Also, tell her that I planted the orange seeds she gave me as soon as I got back (there were 8) and just this week 3 came up. I had almost given up hope.

Best,

Howard